St. Charles Seminary Library
Carthagena, Ohio
OCT 16 '61

"GOD AND THE COLD WAR"
—An Exchange of Views

THE

# Commonweal

*Price of Success*

## The Soviet Burden

by C. K. Yearley, Jr.

*Preachment and Practice*

## Negroes and the Church

by Rollins E. Lambert

*THE RISE OF FOLKUM MUSIC* . . . . . *by Nat Hentoff*
*TRAGIC ART OF FRANCE* . . . . . *by Alice Ellen Mayhew*
*HISTORICAL PANORAMA* . . . . . *by Catharine Hughes*
*UNPOPULAR VIRTUES* . . . . . *by Thomas Curley*

lume LXXV, No. 4 October 20, 1961 Twenty-Five Cents

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# Fall Prospect

Although Congress has adjourned, public focus continues to remain strongly fixed on Washington. The Administration has several crises on its hands. Foremost is the Berlin question. A new threat to our South Vietnam ally is growing; the need to shore up Southeast Asia is more acute. Without a Secretary, the UN finds itself in great jeopardy, and the need for disarmament and thermonuclear controls has never been more urgent.

In the weeks just ahead The Commonweal will concern itself with crucial questions such as these. A trial subscription entered now will bring you a wealth of to-the-point comments on leading developments in this country and overseas, as well as competent and stimulating analyses of current books, plays and movies. Yet the more than four hundred pages of consistently good reading you will obtain in a trial subscription to The Commonweal will cost only $2. Send the attached coupon or a facsimile without delay.

---

**SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER:**
**17 ISSUES FOR $2**
**FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS ONLY**

THE COMMONWEAL, 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, N. Y.

Enclosed is $2. Send The Commonweal for the next 17 weeks to:

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY, ZONE, STATE _____

10/20/61


# THIS WEEK


Week by Week 83

Shape of the Future?
*by James O'Gara* 86

The Soviet Burden
*by C. K. Yearley, Jr.* 87

Negroes and the Church
*by Rollins E. Lambert* 90

Time for Departure: A Poem
*by Joseph Joel Keith* 92

The Screen
*by Philip T. Hartung* 93

The Stage
*by Richard Gilman* 94

An Exchange of Views
*"God and the Cold War"* 95

The Rise of Folkum Music
*by Nat Hentoff* 99

Books 100



THE COMMONWEAL
232 MADISON AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

*Editor*
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

*Managing Editor*
JAMES O'GARA

*Associate Editors*
RICHARD HORCHLER
DANIEL CALLAHAN

*Drama Critic:* RICHARD GILMAN; *Movie Critic:* PHILIP T. HARTUNG; *Paris:* ROBERT BARRAT; *Rome:* GUNNAR D. KUMLEIN; *Great Britain:* MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Second-class postage paid at Orange, Conn. Printed in the U.S.A. and published weekly, except biweekly from mid-July to mid-September, at 440 Post Road, Orange, Conn., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 232 Madison Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-2042.



Copyright © 1961 The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc.


U.S. and Canada, $8 a year. Foreign, $10. Single copies 25¢
Printed at the Wilson H. Lee Co., Orange, Conn.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE
# Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

## week by week

### THE OLD FRONTIER

IF IN THE Berlin crisis the Soviets miscalculate how far they can push the West (read the U.S.), there is a strong possibility of war (read nuclear holocaust). If the Russians do not *miscalculate, there is a strong possibility that* they will accomplish their purposes without resorting to armed conflict, if not in Berlin, then as the next point of Soviet-chosen crisis.

There is another if, admittedly. That is, these grim observations remain valid only if there is no significant change in United States military and foreign policy thinking. But at this time it seems all too doubtful that this vital shift will come, or will come in time.

The peril we are in today is attributable to many things. First of all, there is the simple fact that we have the enemy we do, and the nature of that enemy. But after this, our peril may be ascribed to our own shortsightedness, complacency and self-deception in coping with this enemy. A decade ago we enjoyed a nuclear monopoly, and somehow convinced ourselves that history would stand still for us. We did nothing to take advantage of the time and security the nuclear monopoly provided. Not only did the Administration neglect the continuing technology of weaponry; it followed a calamitous policy of drifting and hoping for the best. Committed to no more than a comfortable status quo, we dissipated our advantage, permitted the Soviets to seize the initiative—politically, economically and militarily—and merely responded to crises as they arose.

Now that the Soviets have largely succeeded in neutralizing our one defense weapon—the nuclear bomb—and now that a new Administration has taken over on the basis of a need for new vigor, new leadership, a drive towards new frontiers, what is our present posture?

Our new national posture, incredibly, seems very little different from the old one. President Kennedy thrilled the nation with his stirring and imaginative Inaugural Address and has subsequently *delivered many other inspiring speeches.* Obviously, it seemed, he understood the need for a national leader who would lead, the necessity for fresh starts, the inevitability of struggle and sweat in shaking the American people from their mood of apathy and drift.

BUT THE PRESIDENT'S actions have hardly measured up to his words. Time and again he has failed to carry through on the Administrative actions which he himself has told us were vital to our national security or well-being. And he has failed to carry through, apparently, because the steps he thought necessary would have been unpopular, or costly, or controversial.

In foreign affairs, it must be said that the Administration inherited staggering problems from its predecessors. With the exception of Cuba, about which enough has been said, the President has done fairly well, especially in the almost hopelessly difficult Berlin situation. But it is simply not enough to do fairly well in the context of an impossible situation. Drastic and dramatic changes in our policy outlook must be accomplished to prevent additional impossible situations from developing, and in this direction little has been done.

The present futility of the doctrine of massive retaliation has been recognized, it is true, and a shift announced in favor of conventional armed strength. But the conventional arms build-up has been so modest and planned at so relaxed a rate that it will be three or four years before the change is significant in the balance of armed power with the Soviets. Mobile or protected-site missile de-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

velopment is also years away, and still not accorded any crash priority. Strategic Air Command bombers have been brought closer to a state of round-the-clock readiness, but not to the point where they would not be rendered almost entirely useless by all-out surprise nuclear attack. In other words, U.S. capacity to retaliate massively has been drastically reduced by Soviet technology, but there is still almost nothing to fill the resultant vacuum in our defense system and will not be for several years.

Important as these military considerations are, however, they are less distressing than the attitudes and purposes which determine them. And on this score there has been little movement from the essentially negative, *ad hoc* policies of the Eisenhower Administration. Unfortunately, such failure of imagination, or purpose, seems still to plague our foreign policy. There are a number of weaknesses in the Communists' world situation which we could exploit—their vulnerability in Central Europe, where they act as nervous jailors to millions of captive peoples, being only the most obvious. There are opportunities for U.S. initiative to probe for once at Soviet security, instead of forever responding to Communist moves. But the Kennedy Administration—like the last one—shows little inclination to think beyond any present crisis. Our attention is apparently riveted on Berlin alone, and not on the part Berlin plays in the long-range struggle with our Communist opponents. A startling, shocking example of this is the recent report from Washington that a sharp cut in our conventional armed forces is desired by the Defense Department, for economy reasons, "if the Berlin crisis eases."

This piece of news, revealing as it does the shortsightedness and reluctance to sacrifice which brought us to our present peril, is nothing less than scandalous. That we cannot have our cake and eat it too is understood, we believe, by more citizens than Mr. Kennedy seems to think. The American people are waiting to be led; but they must have a leader.

## JUSTICE, GEORGIA STYLE

PRESTON COBB, Jr., is not a name familiar to many Americans. His credentials for fame are slight; as slight as those of any fifteen-year-old Negro child in a Georgia share-cropping family. The only thing that sets him apart is that he has been sentenced to die in the electric chair.

By any standards, the execution of a boy in his mid-teens is barbarous—even for Cobb's crime of murder. It is almost impossible to imagine any circumstances which could justify such extreme "justice." In Cobb's case there were no extraordinary circumstances, nothing whatever to suggest the need for an unprecedented sentence.

The defense that was conducted in his behalf by a court-appointed lawyer was hardly less scandalous than the sentence itself. Not only did the lawyer fail to request mercy for Cobb in his address to the jury, he also failed to make even the normal request for a retrial. He excused himself from the latter duty by saying that he did not want to "attack the judgment of this fine jury of representative Jasper County citizens by filing a motion for a new trial."

At this time, however, Preston Cobb, Jr., is still alive, thanks to the last-minute intervention of the Southeastern branch of the N.A.A.C.P. which sent a lawyer to file a motion for a new trial. Cobb's only other hope lies in the possibility that the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles will see fit to grant clemency.

There is one bright spot in this otherwise dismal display of white country-justice. That is the report that it was a group of unidentified whites in Jasper County who urged Cobb's mother to seek the help of the N.A.A.C.P.

The shame of the deep South is that those with consciences are so often forced to remain "unidentified." The hope of the deep South is that such men exist. If Cobb's words to his mother, "God will change things," are to come true, it will only be because some men will have the courage, finally, to take the risk of speaking out publicly. We hope they will start in Jasper County.

## DEFENSE OF VIETNAM

IN ITS BRAVE struggle since 1954 to secure its existence, South Vietnam has been faced with many internal obstacles. Nearly a million refugees from the north had to be resettled and started on making their own livelihood. The armed forces of a strong religious sect had to be subdued, while contending at the same time with varying numbers of Communist guerrillas that have continuously warred against the government. Besides, there were the problems involved in building up a national economy and in establishing a stable currency and sound finances under highly unfavorable circumstances. And serious bureaucra-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ɔ failings offset the personal integrity of the in-epid if authoritarian President Ngo.

American military, technical and economic aid ıs played a major part. South Vietnam has sur-ved and made appreciable progress. But it is ırdly strong enough to repel a full-scale assault ɔm without.

The success of the Pathet Lao forces in Laos ɔw provides a corridor through which North ietnam is feeding men and supplies in substan-ıl quantities to the Communist Viet Cong guer-las, who have recently been attacking with con-ıgents of more than a thousand armed men. heir depredations over the countryside are cost-g fifteen hundred lives a month. As President go has said, it is now "a real war." Moreover, ı acute food shortage in less fertile North Viet-ım intensifies internal pressure for moving South. ɔrth Vietnamese troops are said to be massing ı the South Vietnam border.

The record of the International Control Com-ission in Vietnam supplies damning evidence as what can happen under a troika arrangement. ıe Saigon Government maintains that the Indian-ɔlish-Canadian team has failed to investigate a ıgle complaint against the Communists although esident Ngo has protested literally hundreds of iolations" of the 1954 Geneva accords.

Saigon is coming to the conclusion that in self-eservation it must compensate for these un-ıecked violations by increasing its own arma-ents beyond the Geneva treaty limits. But this ll obviously be insufficient; there must also be bstantial new military aid from without.

Clearly it would be preferable if the forces sent to help defend South Vietnam were dispatched the United Nations. Resort to the SEATO pact ɔuld be second best. But if speedy and effective .N. action proves impossible, then the regional fense pact should be brought into action and ɔbile American units sent as a constituent part. ɔr South Vietnam is a nation eager to defend elf, inviting and wholeheartedly welcoming out-le aid. It constitutes one auspicious place for e free world to make a stand.

## AMILY PLANNING

THE CHURCH has come under many sharp attacks in our times. Some of the sharpest—d newest—attacks have come from those who e the Church as the major obstacle standing the way of an enlightened solution to the world's population growth. But this is only the public side of the story.

The private side of the story is less well-known. It lies in the testimony of numerous pastors and theologians that the Church's stand on artificial birth control is a major source of leakage from the Church. Where it is not a source of leakage it causes, without doubt, innumerable *crises de conscience* even among unwavering Catholics.

The response of the Church to the attacks from without and to the pastoral problem within has been, on the whole, slow. The Church has rarely been able to move as fast as the threats and challenges which face it; and few crises have become acute so rapidly as the present one.

One may readily grant the wisdom of a slow and cautious approach to major theological problems. But there is no like excuse available for the patent failure of Catholics to implement and exploit the possibilities which the Church has opened up in the direction of some solutions.

The repeated calls by the Church for a major research effort into problems of population growth have all but been ignored. The American Catholic Church—which has the university facilities for such research—has been especially remiss. The related calls for greatly increased work on moral means of family planning have met with only a sporadic and scattered response.

The far more difficult business of theological work on the morality of family planning has been an equally random affair. But there is, in this area, some important work afoot. To mention only one instance, the view held by many that large families are desirable is being re-examined in our theological journals.

The question that insistently arises here is what, in our present situation, the Church demands of the Catholic parent? Surely it is true that many theologians do not believe the Church demands nearly as much as is commonly thought.

The gap between theological reflection and popular piety, it has been wisely noted, is one that nags at the life of the Church. The price we pay for the existence of such gaps can be very high: riches that are available are simply not used. In a few instances, the gap can approach the disastrous stage. This often comes about when the great mass of Catholics believe the Church imposes upon them some duties which, in fact, many theologians hold not to be duties at all. It remains for the theologians to spell out more openly and in more detail the present state of their thinking on family planning.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# SHAPE OF THE FUTURE?

GERHARD LENSKI'S *The Religious Factor* was brought out by Doubleday some months ago, but I have not yet had a chance to do more than leaf through it. Normally, of course, this would mean I should not write about it, but in glancing through the book one small item caught my attention and I hope it will not seem too outrageous to discuss it by itself.

Dr. Lanski's book is subtitled "A Sociologist's Inquiry," and it is, I would suspect, too full of tables and statistics for the average reader—although such a reader could acquire from the book a certain amount of interesting, if off-beat, information. Until I read the publicity on the book, for example, I didn't know that "Catholic mothers enjoy their children more than Protestant mothers do—and spank their children more often." Or, on the other hand, that "Catholic business and professional men tend to enjoy their work less and their leisure more than do Protestant and Jewish business and professional men."

These are oddments Dr. Lenski came up with in the course of an empirical effort to measure the effect of religion in American society, specifically in the areas of politics, economics and family life. This is even harder than it sounds, and in examining the way Dr. Lenski went about it I can see why some Catholic sociologists have certain reservations about his book on this score.

The point that struck me, though, was what Dr. Lenski calls the "principle of social hedonism." In brief, what is involved is this: a person's degree of religious involvement, in Dr. Lenski's terms, greatly affects his attitude on the public issues his church chooses to champion. In the matter of public policy on gambling and drinking, for example, active Protestants will tend to be the most confirmed critics of these practices, while the most active Catholics will be close to the other extreme. Similarly, on the issue of birth control the positions will be almost exactly reversed.

This is straightforward enough. In the case of marginal members of both groups, however, the figures indicate that they follow the actively committed group which is in any particular instance supporting the less demanding moral standard. Thus on gambling and drinking, the less committed Protestants are close to the position of the Catholic "activist." On the subject of birth control, the less committed Catholic will be close to the Protestant "activist."

In other words, on each specific issue the group with the less demanding moral norm exerts greater influence over the members of the other group. And this is what Dr. Lenski calls the principle of social hedonism: when two religious groups support opposing moral norms, the less demanding norm tends to wi over the less committed members of both groups.

Now a good many non-sociologists may think thi is so crashingly obvious that there was no need to di up data to support it in the first place. Obvious or not however, it seems to me that Dr. Lenski's point raise questions which are likely to become increasingly cru cial in this nation's future—although I must confes that I am not completely clear in my own mind abou the answers.

In one way, as far as questions of law and publi policy are concerned, it can be said that all Dr. Lensk is describing is the normal working of the politica process. I feel, as I think most people would, that i is a good thing Protestants and Catholics do not forn solid, monolithic blocs on public issues. There is, afte all, always room for difference of opinion on wha would or would not make good law, and political wis dom does not necessarily increase in direct proportio to one's religious commitment. Further, it has to b said, I think, that in this matter the American peopl are quite gun-shy, and not without reason, for religiou leaders too often make demands on our society tha cannot reasonably be allowed.

I certainly am not suggesting, therefore, that th religiously committed ought to have things all thei own way in public life. If a religious group presses fo legislation on a matter that is not a proper subject fo public law or on which there is no reasonable con sensus, the decision has to go against them. But wit all this said, I am still troubled by the contemplatio of Dr. Lenski's principle of hedonism—not so muc as a political but as a religious problem and, insofa as it bears on politics, not so much for right now a for the future, when the issues that confront us ma not be such easy examples as gambling or drinking o birth control but things like compulsory sterilizatio mercy killing, state-encouraged abortions, or the use c weapons even more horrible than those we now have

Despite the statistics that are supposed to indicat a religious revival in this country, it seems to me in escapable that religion today exerts less rather tha more influence in American life. And this is wha worries me—the danger that in an increasingly secu larized society the great moral issues that arise wi not even be seen in moral terms. Yet if religious me are unable to find more common ground on importan matters of public policy, what else can we expect? I is this possible shape of the future that I fear I se in what Dr. Lenski calls the principle of hedonism, an it is hardly a cheering prospect. JAMES O'GARA.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Soviet Burden

*Self-professed proletarians, the Russians have by international standards clearly moved into the world's aristocracy*

by C. K. YEARLEY, JR.

AMERICANS are forever being told that "History has caught up with us." More fully, we are assured that in some unexplained but resumably inexorable way "History," having begun ɔ pursue us in 1914, has at last toward the middle eaches of this century finally taxed us with the in- ɔluble, tragic experiences common to the rest of the ıce. Now any such proposition, of course, ought to be outly debated. But avoiding here whatever arguments ıight be provoked by this romantic and somewhat terary mystique, it is admittedly obvious that a ɔrmidable range of difficulties weighs heavily upon us.

Implied assumptions, however, to the effect that the oviets have adjusted to such problems and have arnered vast experience in handling them, that our fforts in these directions come belatedly and by com- arison leave us laggard, are in many significant particu- ırs untrue. A new sense of tragedy, to be sure, has nderscored Western thought in the past thirty years. t is clear also that the Soviets themselves have several mes been overwhelmed by tragedies of the first ıagnitude. Tragedy is not a commodity in short supply nywhere. But the tragedies involving the United States nd the community of states developing around it are either common to the human race in general nor to ıe Soviets in particular.

In the West, ours have been the strikingly unique roblems attendant upon our unprecedented industrial nd social sophistication. It is precisely this unparalleled ıeasure of strength and complexity, altogether un- ommon in human annals, that has persuaded, if not ɔrced us, to become irretrievably snarled in global ffairs. If such tolls have been levied against us as the rice of our power and prestige, there is ample reason ɔ expect that the maturing industrial and social in- titutions of the Soviet Union will begin exacting a imilar price from its people. The burdens of power may prove mutually exhausting; or if one chooses to put it that way, history and the responsibilities of great power are doubtless catching up with the Russians also.

For example, the Soviets may shortly be constrained to cope with one set of historical ironies apparently operating in almost complete defiance of their national pretensions—even those of their newly revised ideology. Their situation in some ways may not be wholly unlike that of the United States itself. Americans early converted their republic into the world's foremost liberal democracy and in their own minds they have never ceased to regard their country as just that. In the process of developing their political and social experiment, however, they accumulated such stupendous aggregates of property and wealth that much of the world is prone to view them against generally prevalent standards of living. America is seen mainly as a bastion of rich conservatives, opposed to sweeping change and utterly alienated in daily living from the bulk of mankind.

SIMILARLY, the Russians premised their state solidly upon the proposition that they and their doctrines offered special hopes to the poverty-stricken, exploited masses of the world, that they alone read the sequence of events with special prescience, and that they alone are capable of the empathy essential to leading the workers of the world. The West's danger is that this conceivably may be true. Yet the accomplishments of Soviet science and industry epitomized by the probes of Gagarin and Titov, indicate that they too, for all practical purposes, are now members of the world's well-favored twenty percent. Every enterprise of the magnitude of the astronauts'—and there surely will be more of them—reflects an increasingly pluralistic and an enormously wealthier Soviet society. Like the Western states with which it takes issue, Russia is rapidly growing richer and richer while vast multitudes around the planet are fast growing poorer and more miserable.

r. Yearley, a member of the history department at the University of orida, is a regular contributor to this magazine.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Self-professed proletarians, the Russians, by international standards, have indisputably moved into the world's aristocracy. If, as we are told, the determination of the present power struggle hinges upon the attitudes and actions of the world's uncommitted and underdeveloped regions, the Soviets' new status could become a source of deep concern for them. The juxtaposition of Russia's relative opulence and Red China's poverty and population explosion has already produced differing interpretations and emphasis on what ostensibly was once the same gospel.

In fact, the advantages which the Soviets wrung from their old role may be passing amid success. When straining with heroic and puritanical vigor to lay by the capital on which to raise their industrial colossus, the Soviets, as have-nots and underdogs frequently will, won the attention and grudging admiration, at times, even of their enemies. Now that in a material sense they have arrived, it is not unreasonable to expect these initial responses to change.

Power is seldom an author of love, nor does it supply comfortable leisure to those who wield it. Moreover, among the rising generation of Russians, as among their prosperity-bred American counterparts, there is apt to be a notable lack of feeling for the life and experience of other men in other places. This deficiency will certainly insure corresponding reactions, largely unfavorable, elsewhere. For in general about all that the rich have had in common with the poor is an appreciation of the gulf that separates them.

What Gagarin and Titov managed as few other instruments of propaganda ever could was the personalization before an international audience of the available capacities inherent in the maturing Soviet economy. As a consequence, Moscow may succumb to what might be described as the compulsion of its own imagery. Implicit in the propaganda exploitation of the cosmonauts' performance is the boast that the Soviet economy can supply guidance and direct assistance to relatively underdeveloped areas. Perhaps this is the Russian version of America's old attempts, under the banner of manifest destiny and certain moralistic promptings, to Christianize, civilize, and uplift other peoples.

If there is any analogy they had better take care. For here again, the rub is that the Soviets on an ever-expanding scale are going to be taken up on these claims. They are going to be asked, perhaps prematurely considering uncorrected debilities in their economy, to demonstrate their leadership. Committed by their own pronouncements to making the effort, they will probably feel the terrible constraints forcing them to try harder and harder.

Far from being feared in the West, this Soviet involvement is something we ought to desire. First, because it may on a limited scale actually help some unfortunate peoples. Secondly, because a variety evidence suggests that the Soviets, like the nations the West, plotting their progress by the strengthen of their national security, are without much doubt goi to fall well short of their goals. In a number of wa such efforts necessitate the acceptance of a large me ure of waste and failure.

WHATEVER THE Soviets have achieved realms beyond this world, they have done l to bring succor to the benighted peoples of the ea than we. Our operations and our fund of invalua experience is much more consequential than theirs. C exertions and risks have been greater; the lag is the in these fields. Certainly we are sufficiently far ahe of them to realize by now that in most internatio undertakings problems multiply faster than our abil to master them.

In any event while they are dizzy with success t Soviets should not be denied the chance to match c trials here; indeed, though one wonders why, th seem excessively eager to do so. The harsh, alm Malthusian, truth could be that neither they nor t United States and its allies, can within the foreseea future muster, support, or as a matter of domes politics sustain, the massive global interventionism quired to prolong life without prolonging pain a suffering for tens of millions. Neither the Marxists r ourselves, unhappily, hold the panacea with which alter short and brutal lives quickly. Like ourselves t Soviets have also helped in sowing for the revolutic of rising expectations. It is ironically fitting, therefo that their own delusions are leading them to risk t viability of their dogmas by subjecting them to t whirlwinds of desperate unreality characteristic unfortunate millions.

Soviet failure, it must be confessed, while likely these matters is still only a probability. But win lose, as a pretentious power the Soviet Union c hardly be expected to avoid the fate of Western natic which have pioneered these international adventu in the fields of trade and aid. That is, the Soviets ca not escape being conned politically, exploited dip matically, and conceivably embarrassed militarily the governments of suppliant states. Prodded by th fresh confidence in their technical strength the Sovi are literally asking to be subjected to what have sin become daily headaches in Western ministries. Gui low cunning, chicane are the native characteristics a majority of regimes thrown up in the midst of mise and underdevelopment.

Western liberals in particular have watched w growing repulsion the machinations of the National Chinese, of the former Rhee regime in South Kor of the Saigon clique of corruptionists and hack politic of the Laotians—not to mention a dozen other gover



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ents stretching from Latin America to the North rican littoral through the Middle East. We have been alt with so unconscionably by some of these governents that among men who once regarded themselves internationalists a kind of *sotto voce* neo-isolationist ıtiment has become fairly widespread. Still others w think in terms of aid beyond the Atlantic Comınity only on a highly selective basis.

Despite revived disgust with internationalism, Amerins have a considerable lead on the Soviets here. r more than twenty years the United States has en trying to orient itself to world upheavals and has ed to face them responsibly. To date the Soviets have ıited themselves to the simpler, perhaps in a sense wiser task, of irresponsibly trafficking in mischief d exploiting political vacuums. Obviously they could ntinue to do only that. But the seductions of their w self-image as harbingers of scientific benefits and leadership for peace must be very great. It is calated to draw them even farther out of what has been eir own brand of narrow nationalism and isolation ım the world community.

Billed as the advance agents of prosperity, they will evitably be approached by supplicants from every litical and social warren in the world. As this hapns more frequently Moscow will have only two ar choices. If it responds to these appeals favorably, must then proceed even as the West must to work ough established regimes and parties. And to that tent, again like the West, the Russians will become ıgled in unrewarding domestic political squabbles d the palace revolutions of other peoples. The conquences are unlikely to be happier for them than er the long run they have been for us.

If the Soviet response is, on the contrary, unfavora, or if they refuse despite honeyed words to perform their commitments, the marketability of Sovietism ıst surely undergo critical reappraisal. Exactly like eir enemies, the Soviets have put themselves in the enviable position of being damned if they do and mned if they don't.

PURRED by their technical feats into adventures in the Congo, in Indonesia and Laos, in Egypt d in Cuba, the Russians are bound to discover that, yond the official warmth and politeness welcoming eir intrusions, other cultures are astonishingly sistant to any but very select influences. Grandiose ıns for the extension of their national interests will dom prosper. Nothing in the domain of international lklore is much more nonsensical than the nowtablished American notion, belying a deep lack of nfidence in ourselves and our fellow men, that most mankind is a cultural pushover for the Soviets.

On the contrary, it is tolerably clear to students of lture that most societies possess an amazing resilience in the face of other cultures. The Soviets after forty years must still cope with the ingrained stubbornness of their own farmers; in art, letters, in habits of mind, the Poles, to take another example, are still very much men in their own right. So, in a cultural sense, are most of the peoples of Eastern Europe.

Certainly it has been a hard lesson for the United States to digest that its enormously successful brand of liberal capitalism not only does not provide much attraction for most men, but that it also will not be allowed to be of much aid even where it might well do so, as in sections of Latin America or in India. Surely by this time, we should have grasped how exceedingly difficult it is even to export pure beneficence. It is a moot question, however, whether the Soviets as yet are fully aware of this. The West may likewise find itself better off than the Russians are to face the shock of this knowledge, if and when it comes to them.

Democracy, by nature uncommitted to formal ideology, can usually manage to retain its sense of balance and flexibility while absorbing lessons of this kind. But the Soviet commitment to their economic system is total—and it is more inflexible. Politically, much depends upon strict adherence to dogmas at home, though some Soviet economists occasionally now register dissatisfaction with them. The Russians could discover, dialectics or not, that their version of Marxism has little more applicability or influence, maybe less, in the rest of the world than did old-style capitalism. This fact may be hard to take; no doubt it will be vexing to explain to themselves why their keys to history fail to fit quite so many locks. Still, the evidence is clearly before them; what has not proven possible in East Germany is not better calculated to thrive thousands of miles from the Soviet periphery, or beyond the pale of any sophisticated technologies.

Moscow's new role as a mighty scientific and technical power allows scant room for any moves that might be taken as signs of weakness. As imperialists they have therefore embarked upon one of the costliest enterprises known to modern polities. Apparently not even the vestigial imperialism of France and other Western states, biting deeply into life and treasure, gravely endangering political stability time and again, has posed examples stark enough to dissuade them. Nor at this moment have the tumults east of the Brandenburg Gate dissuaded them.

Present events can obscure the accruing obligations of Soviet power and prestige but they will not exorcise them away. Despite evidence which warrants suggesting them now, the suppositions above may or may not be fully borne out. As usual we can only deal in probabilities not certainties. The notable fact is that the Soviets amid success are also plagued by difficulties. To assume otherwise, even without the evidence we possess, would be folly.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

*The Church and its members must practice what they preach*

# Negroes and the Church

by ROLLINS E. LAMBERT

THERE IS an old nursery rime about six men of Indostan, all of them blind, who wanted to investigate the elephant. Each of them encountered a different part of the animal's anatomy, and as a result, each came to a different conclusion about the creature as a whole. In the race question, one of the biggest difficulties with most people, both white and Negro, is the number of blind spots in their outlook. Because of segregation, few white people know the American Negro. But this has not prevented a lot of generalizations about the whole race—generalizations based on very limited experience, or even on what one has read in newspapers and magazines. Among educated people such things are passing away, but one can still hear, in some circles, sweeping statements, such as: Negroes are dirty—they are criminally inclined—they are ignorant—they are oversexed—they are musically gifted—and so on. I have even heard a white person say that all Negroes look alike!

As a matter of fact, most of the conclusions are justified if they are restricted to a segment of the Negro race—just as the same conclusion can be justified if they are applied to segments of any other race or nationality.

The first point I want to make, then, is that the word *Negro* embraces a group of people with differences from each other just as great as in any other similar large group of people. The second point is that the Negro in America is American, and wants to be regarded as such. He is not African, and until recently regarded himself as having practically no connection with Africa. There is no reverence for the mother-country, such as one might find in an American of Irish or Polish or Italian ancestry. Just recently, the American Negro has begun to express interest in and sympathy for the Africans as they struggle for freedom, and Negroes here are beginning to feel some racial solidarity with Negroes there.

Being an American, the Negro wants to be judged not as a group but like other Americans, for what he is personally. How he lives, works, raises his family, keeps his home, participates in civic affairs, pays his bills, conducts himself in public and in private, as neighbor, friend, human being—these are the importa things, and on these the Negro wishes to be judge individually. He does not want to have to bear the bu den of the crimes and excesses of other Negroes, n does he want to ride on the achievements of Jes Owens or Ralph Bunche. He is unable to see how t color of his skin demands that he be treated as he came from another planet.

Most Americans are aware, I am sure, of the risi tide of the Negro demand for recognition, both in t U.S. and in Africa. No amount of wishful thinki on the part of white people is going to stop this ti from achieving its goal, and the sheer magnitude of t Negro population makes it an issue which cannot ignored. Experts on population trends, for examp predict that Chicago will probably contain a non-whi majority within the lifetime of most of us.

THE IMPLICATIONS of the "Negro problem" a so wide that no Catholic, be he priest or layma can excuse himself from being interested, on groun that he or his neighborhood is not affected. First all, a person in any urban area can scarcely avoid co ing into contact with some Negroes, at least casuall As a priest who is a Negro, I know that if more pri and white laity were aware of the presence of potent converts on these occasions, more converts would made; chances are only one in twenty that the Neg in question is already a Catholic. And secondly, are that have not been touched by the Negro migration m be hit suddenly, at any time. A couple of years a I gave a talk to a group of Catholic women in a C cago suburban area. Most of them said that they h little contact with Negroes, and were wondering w they could do to promote interracial justice and chari Last year one of the women telephoned me: "Fathe she said, "when I heard your talk, I thought that t whole thing was pretty remote from me, but I li in Deerfield. . . ."

What, exactly, does the American Negro want? T answer is simple: he wants what most other Americ want.

He wants a good job, a job which is equal to

Father Lambert is a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago. This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ability; a job where he can advance if he has the ability; a job which will give him and his family some security.

He wants a chance at decent housing, and I do not refer only to public housing projects, although these are indispensable for the low-income groups; he wants a house or apartment of a quality and in a location such as white Americans of similar income can have.

He wants to give his children an education comparable to what white children receive, so that they can compete on terms of comparative equality.

A casual observer might say: the Negro *has* all these things—at least in the North; what is he complaining about?

Let's admit right away that tremendous progress along these lines has been made in recent years, and it is going on constantly. But there are still gaps to be filled, and the average Negro thinks much more about these gaps than about the progress already made. It has been nearly a hundred years since Lincoln freed the slaves, but complete freedom is not yet a reality for the descendants of the slaves. Up to now, the Negro has been kept almost completely out of the professional fields and private industry, except within the Negro community itself. He has to depend upon government jobs to give him any real opportunity to display his learning or natural ability. Even after a considerable amount of education, he often has to drive a municipal bus or work in the Post Office in order to have steady employment. In business, few executive positions are open to him; in a bank, he is lucky to be hired as a broom-pusher. Even big companies which do tremendous business with Negroes will hire Negroes only in their lowest ranks of employees. This is true even in northern cities, among which Chicago, incidentally, is regarded by some as the most segregated city in the nation.

Speaking of job opportunities, we would expect that at least in the Catholic Church a Negro man or woman would be given ample opportunity to try a religious vocation or aspire to the priesthood. But even here there is sometimes a color bar, especially where girls are concerned. One superior told a girl I know that the community would pray the Holy Ghost to guide her somewhere else—although the community was desperately praying for vocations itself. And in a certain parish grammar school, the Sisters still dare not talk about religious vocations for girls, for fear that a colored girl might want to join the Order that is teaching there.

The conditions in which many Negroes live come in for a lot of criticism from white people. It would be a shock to some of the critics to find out that the people most dissatisfied with slum conditions are the people who live in them, who are forced by racial segregation to live in them. The average Negro wants a nice home in a decent neighborhood, and is willing to work hard and to pay a lot for it. When he has it, furthermore, he will generally be just as interested as anyone else in maintaining the standards of the neighborhood where he lives.

AS JOB opportunities have improved, the Negro has more money to spend on better housing. This is why such a tremendous pressure has built up in cities where Negroes are confined to a "ghetto"; this is why Negroes are trying so hard to escape the segregated housing which can only result in the spread of slum conditions.

Segregation causes slums in several ways. In the first place, it limits the amount of housing open to the Negro, and therefore causes overcrowding of houses and apartments. Overcrowding, obviously, is directly connected with slum conditions. Moreover, as long as housing is segregated and limited in quantity, the seller can demand a higher price for it; the buyer or speculator, in order to pay off his mortgage or to make a quick profit, is inclined to subdivide his property to produce more rents, and to neglect upkeep. Again, slums will develop.

Cardinal Meyer, Archbishop of Chicago, stated last year that it is high time the pattern of segregated housing in Chicago be broken down. The Negro, in Chicago and elsewhere, wants this, not so that he can run down a neighborhood, but so that he can find decent conditions in which to live and raise his children. It is a great scandal when he finds priests or Catholic organizations blocking his way.

All indications are that the Negro in America is going to reach his objectives—housing, education, work opportunities—and that he will achieve a large part of them within the next decade or two. He will reach them with or without the help of the Catholic Church. If he reaches them without the Church, it is easy to imagine what his attitude toward the Church will be.

At present, however, the Church finds itself in what can generally be called a favorable position, as far as Negroes are concerned. Most American Negroes who belong to a church are Protestants, either Baptists (who have the largest share) or Methodists. About six per cent of Negroes are Catholics. The ninety-four per cent remainder is largely in ignorance about the Church. For most of them, it is just a name—the name of one of the white man's churches. But the Catholic Church has two attractions to draw the Negro's attention: its schools, and its claim to be the one, universal Church.

Many Negroes are aware of the forthright statements and actions of some of our bishops in racial matters, and the elevation of an African to the College of Cardinals drew wide favorable notice. The reason for the attractiveness of our schools even for the non-Catholic Negro is mainly that, if he is ambitious for



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his children—as most parents are—he wants to preserve them from the moral corruption which so often accompanies life in the ghetto. If he cannot escape the ghetto, he does the next best thing: he tries to immunize his children by giving them a religious education. Even if the Negro escapes to a good neighborhood, he is still attracted by the superior moral training and discipline which Catholic schools offer.

The reason why the catholicity of the Church attracts Negroes is obvious: it is in harmony with the urgent need of the Negro for acceptance by the society in which he lives. The Church and its members, however, must practice what they preach. Otherwise this becomes just another disappointing mirage in the Negro's struggle.

ARBITRARILY dividing Negroes into three classes, we can detect certain differences in their attitudes toward the Catholic Church. The poorest class often thinks of the Church as the Church of charity. They know that Christ was kind; they see kindness in Catholic priests and sisters, who are known to be effectively helpful when someone is in trouble. This makes it easy for such Negroes to identify the one true Church.

The middle-class Negro is satisfied when the local parish fulfills his spiritual needs and educates his children, but he is often hurt when he emerges from his own parish into the larger Catholic world. As an example: two colored couples attended a Pre-Cana conference in a parish in a part of Chicago rather far from the Negro community. The other couples attending treated them with obvious coldness and hostility. As a result, one of the Negro couples dropped out after two sessions. The other couple, more sophisticated and experienced, felt the same hostility, but had the courage to complete the conference.

Along the same line, many an enthusiastic convert has been stunned and baffled when he discovered that some fraternal organizations have no Negro members; that he will find difficulty in being accepted as a patient in some Catholic hospitals; that it is practically impossible for a Negro doctor to get on the staff of a Catholic hospital; that there are Catholic high schools which do not have and do not want colored students. Such a convert was told, when he took instructions, that he was becoming a member of a universal church, a church which regards all men as equally precious before God; he sees that the teaching of the Church and the performance of its members do not match—and naturally, he feels that the white man has betrayed him again.

The upper-class Negro—to get back to our threefold division—is critical of the Church and skeptical of its claims. He knows that his race is making great progress in many fields; he sees that the color line is breaking down rapidly everywhere. And he sees that the Church, which ought to be leading this progress, is lagging behind or even fighting it. He experiences the racial prejudice of white Catholics, including, sometimes, priests. He observes that we preach against many kinds of sin, but seldom about the sin of hating our neighbors, if they happen to be Negroes. He notices the silence of the Catholic Church in his struggle in many places, and remembers it. His conclusion is that the Catholic Church is lying when it claims to be universal, and that it is hypocritical when it tolerates racial prejudice and segregation. He will not accept such an un-Christian version of Christianity. Consequently, we find among the number of converts few—very few—who are doctors, or lawyers, or university professors.

Being a priest and a convert to the Church myself, I am naturally interested in bringing other Negroes into the Church. This does not mean that we Catholics should be alert and active in the field of social justice and charity only as means to conversions. Charity and justice are virtues which make us Godlike, virtues demanded of us by God, if we are to save our own souls. But when the Negro sees that bishops, priests, sisters, Catholic laity understand his problems; when they prove by their actions that they are sincerely on his side, and are not just reluctantly assuming that position when it is too late to do anything else; when he sees that the white Catholic laity are given a firm and decisive leadership in the direction of interracial justice and charity—then the Negro will begin to see the Church in all its beauty, as the worldwide society which reaches down into his own city, his own neighborhood, to raise him up to God.

---

## TIME FOR DEPARTURE

Waiting now, where no word is said,
and, if said, no one would hear,
I sit in the secret place
of the child in his greenest year.

Opened shells that lie at my feet
are not touched, or eyed,
the wonder and mystery
faded by time. But I rise,

suddenly now to hear what I heard
when all song was new.
But I see the deserted nest,
and its eggs. I am empty too.

How long, how long the boy would wait
for the nester: half the day.
How long in that secret place
where I haven't long to stay.

JOSEPH JOEL KEITH.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# THE SCREEN

## HIS IS NEW YORK?

CAUSE FOR rejoicing! It's not every day that a movie version of a theatrical musical play is better than the original. But such is the case th "West Side Story," the fine film presented by irisch Pictures and Seven Arts Productions. Then ain, it's not every day that a movie has the golden portunity to start from a stage play conceived, dicted and choreographed by Jerome Robbins, with onard Bernstein's exciting score and with Arthur urents's book telling a modern version of the old meo and Juliet story.

Film producer Robert Wise, who directed the movie th Jerome Robbins, takes every advantage of the as and talents offered by the original show and then es off on fanciful flights of his own to turn the whole ing into imaginative cinema. From the very beming there's an air of great expectation as Bernin's overture fills the sound track and the screen ows a player piano roll whose notches gradually beme the buildings on Manhattan Island over which camera flies to settle on New York City's West le. Immediately, the prologue, with the Jets and the arks dancing their dares and challenges in lively llet, makes us apprehensive of the troubles and gedies to come.

Instead of Shakespere's constantly-bickering Mongues and Capulets who kept Romeo's and Juliet's ve from happy fulfillment, Ernest Lehman's wellitten script presents the Jets and the Sharks who em to work overtime to keep Tony and Maria apart. The Jets, led by Riff (Russ Tamblyn) are convinced at they're "the greatest" and that this neighborhood longs to them. The Sharks, led by Bernardo (George akiris) are Puerto Rican and as convinced as the s that they're second to none. Again and again roughout this well-made film, the opposition between two gangs is eloquently portrayed through ballet. e dances are beautifully designed and directed by obbins who uses the West Side as his stage and gives moving story a vitality that fairly makes the whole een dance. The good cast, especially Tamblyn and akiris, come through superbly in these ballets.

Thanks to the good sound track, Stephen Sondim's clever lyrics come across even better during the urse of the movie than they did in the stage play, d now combined with the first-rate color photogray, they give "West Side Story" greater intimacy than had in the legitimate theater.

Natalie Wood as Maria (Juliet) and Richard ymer as Tony (Romeo) are quite attractive in the ignant lead roles. Beymer handles his songs well; and so skillfully has Marni Nixon's voice been used for Miss Wood's in the songs that the substitution is not at all apparent. Furthermore the singing throughout the film, done without spectacular operatic flare but with pleasing clarity, gives the picture a note of reality not common to musical movies. But then all of "West Side Story," in spite of its imaginative movie-making, has a compelling reality that demands attention.

NEW YORK is also the locale of "Breakfast at Tiffany's." Not the grim New York of "West Side Story," but the lighter and swankier East Side which Franz Planer's camera has captured in some stunning color photography. In fact all of Martin Jurow's and Richard Shepher's production is handsome. The story line may not be exactly what Truman Capote had in mind in his daffy little novel about playgirl Holly Golightly, but the script George Axelrod wrote catches the spirit of the Capote piece, cleans up a few passages and adds some touches that round out the plot neatly for movie purposes.

The cast, under Blake Edwards's good direction, plays the wacky story to perfection. Audrey Hepburn, looking incredibly lovely in clothes designed by Hubert de Givenchy, carries on as if she'd been preparing for the "kook" role all her career. She makes the loose Miss Golightly, with her non-sequiturs and home-made standards, almost believable. The role of the young writer who lives upstairs from Miss Golightly in a brownstone in the East 70's and who tells the story in the original Capote, has been changed considerably for the film. And, although George Peppard looks too much like a healthy and nearly grown-up Boy Scout to be entirely convincing as a gigolo, he plays the part with the right light touch and with enough longing for Holly and surprise at her behavior. Admirably supporting these two are Patricia Neal as the fashionable married woman who's keeping the writer in elaborate style, Martin Balsam as a Hollywood agent who can't decide if Holly is phony or a real phony, Buddy Ebsen as Holly's hillbilly husband who refuses to admit their marriage was annulled, and several others who add to the fun and confusion—plus a cat who steals every scene he's in.

The film's only jarring note is turned in by Mickey Rooney as a Japanese photographer; the fault is not his, however, the role is a poorly-conceived caricature —which the film's makers must have thought fit into this nest of screwball characters.

"Breakfast" isn't strong on plot, but its people and decorations are very amusing, and every now and then it has a poignant scene that may evoke a sigh of regret for Holly's misfortunes, most of which she meets with her usual aplomb. The picture also has a hilarious cocktail party which is one of the funniest scenes I've ever seen in a movie. PHILIP T. HARTUNG.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# THE STAGE

## WIN, PLACE AND SHOW

DAVID ROSS'S revival of "Ghosts" isn't something to make an Ibsenite bring votive offerings to Fourth Street. If it comes through, it's by a narrow margin, the triumph of an indestructible core over a shredded surface, Mrs. Alving managing her heartbreak against a flood of distractions and misdirections. On almost every count "Ghosts" is far less successful than Mr. Ross's "Hedda Gabler" of last season.

To begin with, what aberration led to his choice of the R. Farquharson Sharpe translation, which surpasses poor old Archer's in vitality and sense by about the same margin by which Kennedy beat Nixon? He must have suspected something, for he had Carmel Ross, his wife, jazz up some of the lines, the result being rather like a soiree in which Queen Victoria and Prince Albert converse animatedly with Jack Kerouac and Harry Golden. "Humbug," "hussy," "filial sentiments" and such ricocheting off contemporary slang brings you about as far from Ibsen's poetry as it's possible to get.

Then there are the performances. The acting in "Ghosts" is not so much bad as wrong. Perhaps only Chekhov requires of actors a greater sacrifice of the part to the whole than Ibsen, but in Ross's production we have a collection of wayward personalities instead of a five-figured body. Leueen MacGrath is an accomplished actress, with force and outline, but she is pitched too high above the play, on too aristocratic a plane; she takes a long time coming down to the gutty realities that are her pressure toward awareness and the site of the tragedy.

Of the rest, Staats Cotsworth plays Manders in much too parodic a vein—he is not meant to be so obtuse; Carrie Nye as Regina is impossibly breathy and wild-eyed; Joseph Marino as Oswald is simply a young handsome actor without an inch of range; and only John McQuade as Engstrand comes close to what must have been Ibsen's intention.

If after this I nevertheless recommend your seeing "Ghosts" you will I hope take it as a tribute to Ibsen who, it may be my special derangement to believe, is worth more in theatrical extremis than any number of other playwrights in the best of health. (*At the Fourth Street Theater.*)

EVERYTHING was in favor of "From the Second City": the current vogue of improvised theater and of Sahl, Berman and Newhart; our untapped fund of appreciation for stage humor with richer sources than adultery in Larchmont or the fecundity of rabbits. But this revue from Chicago has only intermittent vi tues and its flat spaces are as wide as tundras; its cas as is so often the case, is better than its material, whic encompasses such contemporary standbys as segreg tion, the resurgence of Nazism, Barry Goldwater ar other-directedness. Severn Darden, Paul Sand, Barba Harris and Alan Arkin are especially strong and i ventive, but I found myself thinking that they usual showed to much better advantage in more purely phy ical numbers than in those that relied upon wit—whi too often sent the most explicit telegrams concerni their intentions. (*At the Royale.*)

AFTER THE first act of N. F. Simpson's "One W Pendulum" the audience can be forgiven for thir ing it's witnessing a British version of "You Can't Ta it with You." Among a number of transients, there's crippled aunt who mutters about locomotion, a s who is training speak-your-weight machines to si the Hallelujah Chorus and a father who is building replica of the Old Bailey courthouse in the living-roo It is all extravagant and not very amusing.

But to leave at this point would be a serious m take, for the second act blossoms into an extraordinar comic bit of theater, an exercise in precise absurd that owes a little to Ionesco but perhaps even more Kafka, whose legends of disconnection and the sin lacra of meaning were, it will be remembered, re aloud by him with gusts of laughter. What happens "One Way Pendulum" is that in a mock trial scene bc the logic of the law and our penchant for dovetaili systems of values are subjected to merciless scruti full of exactitude, acerbity and painful jest. It see impossible to convey the true quality of Mr. Simpso metaphysical humor, but I suspect I shall be back c day soon to try. (*At the East Seventy-Fourth Str Theater.*)

FINALLY, I want to say a word about "The F Eye of Love," Arnold Weinstein's antic fa about the American experience. The play has bc running for some months, but hasn't yet been m tioned in these pages, and for all its occasio gaucheries and its unevenness of tone it deserves to known as widely as possible. "Red Eye" is a hoa romp between certain fixed poles of our national a bition and mythology—our desire for the "key existence" and our equally strong craving for casl and as it moves like a slalom race down an exceedi gnarled mountain it tosses off successive minor mira of language, gesture and sheer visual *éclat.* I sho add that its cast, almost uniformly up to the job headed by the wondrous Jane Romano, who has of Ethel Merman's brassiness without any of her (*At the Provincetown Playhouse.*)

RICHARD GILMAN



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# An Exchange of Views

## "God and the Cold War"

Richmond, Va.

TO THE EDITORS: You are disturbed that Mr. Brent Bozell has urged men, in *National Review*, to defend the West as God's civilization [Sept. 8]. You consider this a "startlingly original" view, concrete proof of the incompetence of the magazine that praised and printed it. There is a distinction, you rightly observe, between the Church and Western civilization; indeed, the universal mission of the Church rules out merely parochial boasts. But you add the sweeping statement that Christ "does not rely on secular means to fulfill His mission"; and Father Weigel is adduced as saying that the Churches "seek for the salvation of man in terms of transcendence of the secular."

This may be the role of "the Churches"; but not of the Catholic Church. That Church, unlike rival schools of thought, is founded on a fact of history, on the Incarnation. Its aim is not to transcend but, sacramentally, to transmute man's life on earth. Christ worked man's redemption in history, by a personal career ending in the Crucifixion; and the Church mystically extends in time Christ's life and work. As Christ chose to depend on "secular means" to maintain His Sacred Body on earth—means like eating and sleeping, the scandal of Docetists and other "transcendental" heresies —so the organized earthly body of the Church is defended by secular means. The divine promise to the Church is not that it will not need such protection, but that the protection will always be furnished.As a matter of history, the major work of such protection has been the labor which gave to one civilization the commonly accepted name of Christendom.

The Church has always recognized the role and importance of such earthly defenders of the Faith, even granting to secular lords such titles as "Holy Roman Emperor," "Most Catholic Majesty," or "Defender of the Faith." Even physical areas of the world have been known as "The Holy City," "The Holy Roman Empire," or "The Eldest Daughter of the Church." The Church had religious orders of warrior-champions; it preached Crusades. I daresay members of The Commonweal staff may have been knighted by the Pope in one of these ancient orders of defenders of the Faith. [Curiously enough, no.—Ed.] Surely Saint Joan of Arc would have been surprised to learn that God does not use secular means to protect a Christian civilization, since He entrusted to her hands the task of bringing a Christian ruler to a Christian ritual of institution in authority. Saint Louis IX would also be surprised at The Commonweal's maxim. So would Saint Pius V, who instituted the Feast of the Holy Rosary in thanksgiving for the victory at Lepanto. So would Saint Thomas Aquinas, who wrote that members of the military order, or any soldiers of a Christian nation dying with pure motive in a war against infidels, could be considered a martyr for the Faith.

You may consider all these facts as so many ecclesiastical aberrations; but one should teach the saints the meaning of the Faith only after severe self-questioning. The Church's attitude has been consistent over the centuries, in the institution of military orders, in the recognition of emperors and kings as earthly defenders of the Faith, in the preaching of Crusades, in the union of patriotism with religious motives, in the teaching of Aquinas on the meaning of a holy war; and, finally, in the recognition—continuous from Prudentius through Dante to Newman—that the Roman Empire was an extraordinarily apt tool for the work of the Church's organization and advance in history, a tool that has become permanently useful in the fabric of ecclesiastical discipline and canon law.

I do not contend that all, or even most, Crusaders or Christian rulers have been moral or intellectual paragons. Not even all the Popes have been that. You ask whether Nazi Germany was more a part of God's civilization than India during the last war. Of course it was. There are similar questions—not identical, but analogous, and with the same point—that are familiar to all Catholics: Was the Borgia Pope more Christ's vicar than Marcus Aurelius? Was Judas more a disciple of Christ than some Buddhist monk and mystic? The answer is tragic, in these cases, as in the case of Nazi Germany; but the answer is yes. The Christian individual, and the Christian civilization, *do* have a greater responsibility, and a correspondingly greater guilt when they reject that duty.

It is true that the civilization that has served the Church on earth is not identical with the Faith; nor is the Church itself, as an earthly institution, identical with the saved, or with the Faith. But to the Church, fallible in its individual members, has been given the Faith and the sources of salvation. And, in a lesser but analogous way, now historically established for the centuries thus far traversed, it has been given to the West to nourish and protect the earthly body of the Church. The very fact that we of the West are trying to find ways to teach



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Christianity to other civilizations, that we must do this by missions, by seeking new formulations of the Church's doctrines in foreign idioms, shows that the West is still the guardian of the Faith, that the divine call is still being carried by minds trained in the discipline of Christendom. And the way to succeed in translating Christian truths is not to abandon the basic formulations achieved by centuries of human effort by the theologians and thinkers of the West. Any translator succeeds in his work only if he knows the language in which he finds the truth he would broadcast.

The work of defending the Church, and therefore the Faith, has not been one to which the Western civilization contributed only sporadically, at critical and isolated instants like Lepanto and Tours. The whole of the West's resources of thought and language have been recruited in the formulation and protection of Christ's teachings. The Church has been given the supernatural truths of the Faith; but not, as Newman pointed out, in a set of syllogisms written by the Holy Ghost. Men must probe the mysteries of Christ's life and words, and articulate their implications in the clumsy medium of particular languages invented by the differing human communities. This process, this "development of doctrine," takes place under divine guidance, with its infallible seat in time; but the developed formulae are in a human idiom, conditioned to the human mind, as surely as the Gospels are. Christian truth has been articulated, has found ever more refined formulation, during centuries of Western experience, in language and concepts about the person, about matter and form, about society and the individual, about the uses of language and symbol, that are as distinctive as the human accent of Galilee. Christ did not, like Plato, invent an abstract language. Often, to understand His words, we have to understand the time and place in which He spoke them, the particular language He used. The same is true of His continuing teaching through the life of the Church. To this point in history, the human instruments for this essential work have been the West's instruments. And since the Church's claim is an historical one—based on the apostolic succession, the unbroken link in time with Christ's imposition of hands—that work will endure, as ancient Rome lives renewed and transformed in the Church, a "secular means" put to permanent spiritual use.

It is a scandal, for those who believe in "non-sectarian" truth—in a truth that can heal man's crippled nature by mere intellectual adherence to abstract ideas —to think that the truth must have an earthly center and organizational structure for its advance in time. Such an organization, based on the weak human components of earthly society, seems to tie truth down to individuals' failures. But the Christian truth heals with a divine touch, a physical thing, as Naaman had to be cured by contact with a particular (and a muddy) river, as the sight of the blind man was restored through the instrumentality of dust and spit. The scandal of Redemption's physical vehicle is the enduring scandal of the Cross, of the Incarnation, of the sacramental view of life. The challenge to the Christian is to work within the demands of this *embodiment* of the Word in time; it is a challenge that can never be met by denying any relation between Christ's work and "secular means."

Historians of all schools recognize that there is a general "loss of nerve" in Western civilization today. Men feel that its resources are not sufficient for coping with modern challenges. This loss of nerve has infected Catholics; with apparent good reason, since there must be an ever-new response to new problems if the development of the Church is to continue as a living force in the world. But the way to grow is not to chop away one's roots. The Catholic should not too patly parrot the contemporary praise of India or Africa and the denigration of the civilization disciplined by Aristotle and Aquinas. The Catholic can never hold that—as some men are muttering in their despair—the West has been on the wrong track all the time. In fact, with the growing dissolution of certainty, the temptation of most Christians is not to identify the Church with some temporal empire, but to think that the Church's work can go on by the mere force of Truth. Before the sacramental society of Christendom was built up, such a transcendental, gnostic emphasis on disembodied truth was the major source of most heresies—the denial of Christ's body, and of the body of his Church; and, since the Reformation, with its denial of an external Christian authority centered in Rome, the gnostic spirit has returned at a terrifying pace.

Catholics are still nervously assuring modern Liberals that the Church and the temporal empires of the past were not identical; they do not see that history has entered a new stage of dissolution, in which men must be reminded that the Church has a necessary career and organizational center in temporal society. Historical and psychological relativism are the enemies now, not rigid authoritarianism. Men ask "Do we not know all about Rome with its corruption and totally human character?"—as they asked "Do we not know Joseph, this man's human father?" They will not receive a religion that existed through, and played its part in, the bloody history of Europe; as men found it hard to believe, once, that any good could come out of the despised city of Nazareth, or that a divine promise could be carried down through the criminal history of a single race.. Modern sophisticates scoff at the idea of learning from mediaeval theologians, as Romans refused to accept a religion of slaves. The Incarnation, and its consequences, will always shock the confident "transcendentalist," who asks, with Naaman, whether his own land does not have rivers and sources of cleansing, and who "goes away with indignation." A



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wise regard for human frailty will try to soften the shock and overcome the indignation; but it will not surrender to it, or agree with Naaman (and The Commonweal) that God "does not rely on secular means." Of course, the divine mandate was not directly given to the West, as it was to the Hebrew nation. But theologians teach us that the implications of the Incarnation stretch far beyond the hypostatic union itself. Christ's unique relation to time indicates a general new function to be played by time and secular history in the scheme of salvation. It is this principle that you seem to deny in your reference to "secular means."

As for the article that occasioned your editorial: notwithstanding the fatuous title given Mr. Bozell's essay on the magazine's cover, Mr. Bozell was obviously rebuking the leaders of the West for deserting their ancient role as guardians of the Faith. Therefore, it seems to me, he could hardly be idealizing the West, or identifying it with the Faith. When one rebukes a child for being unfilial, one is hardly denying the unique status of parents; matricide is not the same thing as suicide. It is true that men must not make a boast or cult of merely parochial associations. It is also true that God, in His providence, may give the task of defending the Church into the hands of other, unborn civilizations; but the West should not consciously abandon, any further than it has, the major reason for its historical importance. Even a broken sword is better than no sword; the way to reform the human instruments of the Faith is not to destroy them entirely, especially in an age of doubt and dissolution, when civilization is menaced everywhere. If a new cultural vehicle for the Church's action is to arise out of modern chaos, it will do so at the bidding of the Holy Ghost. We cannot presume to make our hypotheses a part of that future providence, or to invite chaos on the understanding that the Church will somehow survive. We must preserve the Church with all the resources at our disposal; and the major arsenal of such human instruments is still the Christian wisdom of the West.

Finally, with regard to your editorial's more particular assertion—that the very expression of a view like Mr. Bozell's is evidence of incompetence in the understanding of the Church's relationship with time —let me remark that another person who would not pass this handy theological I.Q. test is Cardinal Newman, who wrote in the *Idea of a University*: "this same *orbis terrarum* [i.e., of the classical world], which has been the seat of civilization, will be found, on the whole, to be the seat also of that supernatural society and system which our Maker has given us directly from Himself, the Christian Polity. . . . Often indeed they have even moved *pari passu,* and at all times there has been found the most intimate connection between them. Christianity waited till the *orbis terrarum* attained its most perfect form before it appeared; and it soon coalesced, and has ever since co-operated, and often seemed identical, with the civilization which is its companion. . . . The grace stored in Jerusalem, and the gifts which radiate from Athens, are made over and concentrated in Rome. This is true as a matter of history. Rome has inherited both sacred and profane learning; she has perpetuated and dispensed the traditions of Moses and David in the supernatural order, and of Homer and Aristotle in the natural. To separate those distinct teachings, human and divine, which meet in Rome, is to retrograde."

You, the editors of The Commonweal, may differ with Newman; but it would be rash to dismiss him, contemptuously, as incompetent. You might even learn a few things from him—such as not to brand as "startlingly original" a view that has been held by Christian thinkers and teachers ever since the time of Prudentius, by men as incompetent as Aquinas and as little known in the world as Dante. GARRY WILLS.

## REPLY

MR. WILLS has done his manly best for Mr. Brent Bozell, for his article "Can a Catholic be a Liberal?' " and for the editorial judgment of *National Review,* which described the article as a "meticulous report." In the course of his defense he has managed to be informative, even gently entertaining, and his intentions are clearly of the best. Unhappily for his argument he has in almost every instance missed the mark. Not only does he fail to rescue Mr. Bozell from a foundering vessel, he seems quite happy to jump in beside him and bore a few holes of his own.

It would be difficult to track Mr. Wills through his incursions into history, theology, biblical exegesis and linguistics. Fortunately this is not necessary, for much of what he says is based on misquotation and misreading and is thus irrelevant. In his first paragraph Mr. Wills acknowledges a distinction between the Church and Western civilization, a distinction we insisted upon only because Mr. Bozell so wonderfully confused the two in his article. Apparently uneasy at finding himself in agreement with the editors of The Commonweal, Mr. Wills proceeds to swing wide.

Addressing the editors he says, "You add the sweeping statement that Christ 'does not rely on secular means to fulfill His mission,' " and then proceeds to list a number of saints whom this statement would have surprised. In fact what we wrote was this: "The kingdom which Christ promised is not of this world and, as He told the Roman authorities, He does not rely on secular means to bring about its fulfillment." What we wrote bears some resemblance to these words from the Gospel of St. John: (18:36) "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not be delivered up. . . ." We doubt, therefore, that we would have surprised Saints Joan of Arc, Louis IX, Pius V or Thomas Aquinas, as Mr. Wills suggests.

It is quite true, as Mr. Wills points out, that the Church, deeply imbedded in time and history, works through and in the material order. But it is one thing to say this and another to say that the Church looks to the secular realm for its defense. Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to protect the Church, not those army divisions which Stalin so naively inquired about.

The trouble with Mr. Wills' reading of Church history is that it fails to take account of the Church since the Vatican Council. That Council was the culmination of the Ultramontane movement which sought to reassert the spiritual authority of the Church and to break the bonds which had tied the Church to particular states. At one point in history, perhaps, those bonds were appropriate and Mr. Wills' examples are in order. But it soon became clear—in the development of Gallicanism, Josephism and Febronianism—that the price the Church had to pay for the protection of the State was far too high. What it gained in protection, it paid for with its liberty. Even a glance at recent Church history will show that the Church has ceased to rely on secular society for its defense.

Mr. Wills has a passion, apparently, for debating the obvious. Yes, Catholicism is an historical religion; yes, Christendom is Western; yes, Judas was more a disciple of Christ than some Buddhist monk; yes, matricide is different from suicide and half a sword is better than none. We willingly concede what we never questioned. If Mr. Wills wishes to debate truisms and platitudes he must look elsewhere for his opposite number.

Only in the last several paragraphs does Mr. Wills come to grips with the main issue. He says that Mr. Bozell could hardly be identifying the West with the Faith and triumphantly brings forth a quotation from Cardinal Newman which, he says, expresses a "view like Mr. Bozell's." Now the editors of The Commonweal, as Mr. Wills suggests, may certainly differ with Cardinal Newman in some instances—but this is not one of them. And we find a great and deciding difference between the views of Mr. Bozell and the Cardinal.

Referring to the classical world and Christianity Newman speaks of the "most intimate connection between them" and says they often "sound identical." It should be unnecessary to point out that things can *seem* identical only if they are not, that there must be at least two things before there can be a connection. Mr. Bozell, on the other hand, wrote: "The West makes this claim over against the rest of the world: *That it has been vouch-safed the truth about the nature of man and his relationship to the universe. . . .*" (his italics). This claim the Church can make, but—we repeat—the Church and the West are not identical.

What we did say is that it is almost blasphemous to speak of the West as God's civilization—as if other civilizations were not also His. To put it sharply, Communist Russia is also God's, however much it tries to deny Him, just as we are all God's creatures whether we deny it or not. A nation or a civilization is no less God's because it is Godless.

This might seem only a semantic difference which prolonged discussion would clear up. But Mr. Bozell's inferences make it quite another thing. For he goes on to say: "And so the West asserts a God-given right, and thinks of it as a God-imposed duty, to conserve and spread *its* truth, to judge political and economic and social systems according to *its* lights, to change and improve them under *its* authority."

This view might be contrasted with what Pope John said when he wrote:

"Countries in the process of economic development often manifest their own unmistakable traits. Those may reflect the specific character of their natural environment, or traditions rich in human values or some distinctive qualities in their citizens.

"Now economically advanced countries, when lending their help, must recognize and respect this individuality and take pains not to yield to the temptation of imposing their own way of life while aiding such nations."

Even though this quotation comes from *Mater et Magistra,* a document which did not find favor in the offices of the *National Review,* we offer it to Mr. Wills who is, apparently, fond of argument from authority.

The intellectual confusion of Mr. Bozell, which Mr. Wills to some degree shares, can have harmful results when it is intruded into the social and political order. Intellectual distinctions need not, as some fear, weaken the nerves or dampen one's ardor. As we wrote in our editorial: "We have a human obligation to perfect and transmit this [Western civilization] as best we can, and in order to do so we need deep moral energy and dedication. Christians will find a source of this energy and profound reason for the dedication in Christianity." We are sure that many people will subscribe to this sentiment who also see a distinction between the Church and the West, the Christian conscience and the Western conscience, who also believe that the Church ultimately transcends and sits in judgment upon every civilization, including the West. And this, as Chesterton would say, is the big question.

THE EDITORS.

COLLEGE of MOUNT ST. JOSEPH on the OHIO
In Suburban Cincinnati

A FOUR-YEAR liberal arts college for women. Prepares for teaching in Art, Business, Health and Physical Education, Home Economics, Library Science, Music and Speech, as well as in Secondary and Elementary Education. In cooperation with the Good Samaritan Hospital, Cincinnati, the college offers a four-year program in nursing leading to the diploma in nursing and the baccalaureate degree. Prepares dietitians and medical technologists.

For catalog address THE DEAN, MOUNT ST. JOSEPH, OHIO.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# The Rise of Folkum Music

by NAT HENTOFF

IN A GREENWICH Village refuge for apprentice sophisticates a few weeks ago, a smooth young man announced from the bandstand that he would let us in on a vintage Southern mountain ballad. "I don't know exactly where it came from," he said with what I presume was guilelessness. "In fact, I don't know much of anything about it. But I sure do like it." Predictably, the performance was as blandly amateurish as the Sunday afternoon come-all-ye's at Washington Square, where civil liberties triumphed over aesthetics earlier this year. ("Mayor Wagner," comedian Lenny Bruce observed at the time, "was simply expressing a musical fact. He didn't mean, 'They *can't* sing.' He was just pointing out they can't *sing.*")

Certainly not all the eager citybillies who are finding twangy status in rummaging through the Child ballads and other pre-Mitch Miller songs are ignorant of the music's context. Many of them have swallowed large parts of the Lomax books of collected folk tunes, and there are even a few who own some of the Library of Congress discs that were recorded in the field by farmers, lumberjacks, and housewives who weren't aware they were artists until the man with the portable recording machine assured them they were.

Those of the citybillies, moreover, who go on to make itinerant careers of their enthusiasm generally find it necessary to do some sporadic research, if only to defend themselves against querulous purists in their audiences. Nonetheless, an increasingly high percentage of what is being presented as folk music in night clubs, coffee houses and on records is much more folkum than folk. (So far as I can determine, the term "folkum" was first insistently used by the scathingly honest monthly *Little Sandy Review,* published at 3220 Park Avenue South, Minneapolis 7, Minnesota —the apoplectic conscience of the folk industry.)

It is easy enough to skewer the obvious medicine men—Harry Belafonte, the Kingston Trio, the Brothers Four, the self-parodying Limeliters—but there is another dispiriting trend among the more militant young toward twisting insufficiently comprehended folk music into shrill weapons for "the cause." In an interview in *The Realist,* cartoonist Shel Silverstein tells of a Sunday experience in Washington Square: ". . . this one eighteen-year-old kid is sitting there with his guitar, and on the guitar is a sign that says, 'This Machine Fights for Freedom.' This is too much—an eighteen-year-old with a freedom-fighting machine. It's a goddam *guitar,* is what it is. It's a guitar, and it don't fight for nothing'—it plays. Unless maybe . . . he hits with it."

On Folkways Records meanwhile there is a "freedom-fighting" singer, Bill McAdoo, who adds his own leaden lyrics to traditional tunes, and sings with a nearly total innocence of musical form or substance. The work song, *Jumping Judy,* becomes:

"I won't fight for Mr. Franco,
Chiang Kai-shek or Syngman Rhee,
I won't fight for Batista,
I won't fight for tyranny."

I won't either, but even the prose of Max Lerner has somewhat more inspirational grace than Mr. McAdoo's stiff sloganeering. As the Gospel singing of the Southern Negro students has indicated (*We Shall Overcome,* Folkways FH 5591), it's certainly possible to adapt folk material to current action; but the process usually is about as subtly executed as a *National Guardian* analysis of why Russia resumed testing.

Aside from this transmogrification of folk song into hoarse self-righteousness, there are the hopefully portentous artists among the new exploiters of the folk. Odetta, with a deep voice, choked diction, and as rigid a beat as Lawrence Welk, has somehow captivated large numbers of undergraduates into confusing her with the Earth Mother. Except when he sings Jewish and some Russian songs, Theodore Bikel is also far from the marrow of the folk, but he at least doesn't regard his flair for entertainment as solemnly as Odetta, who seems to have picked up the idea that most folk songs were originally sung in a state of immolation.

There are a number of exceptions in the spread of juke box and "high art" folkum. A shy, stubborn, twenty-year-old from Boston, Joan Baez, has proved that even if Cecil Sharp didn't collect some of his songs from her family, a singer with the imagination to penetrate folk music in a personal style that is luminously intense and meaningfully dramatic can contribute to a legitimate urbanization of the folk tradition. Miss Baez has occasional lapses of taste, but she is

Mr. Hentoff is a regular contributor.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

indeed an artist—one of the exceedingly few to have appeared among the non-indigenous folk performers. (*Joan Baez,* Vanguard 9078).

In another direction, the New Lost City Ramblers have lovingly absorbed the spirit—as well as the pungent lyrics—of such mountain string groups of the late 1920's and early 1930's as Gid Tanner and his Skillet Lickers and Ernest Stoneman and his Blue Ridge Corn Shuckers. Theirs, to be sure, is a form of revivalism, but they know the backgrounds of the music and its original styles and have added their own brisk, high-spirited personalities. In short, their work is a tribute to their sources, not a theft from them. (*New Lost City Ramblers,* Folkways 2396, 2397, 2398). In connection with the acquisitive approach to the folk tradition, there is the extraordinary grasping of copyright ownership to venerable ballads by the more prehensile performers. A case in point is a new Atlantic release of *The Golden Vanity* which appeared in one broadside version as early as 1682. The performer is Lonnie Donegan, a British young man who was once a guitarist in a quasi-jazz band. And the composer of *The Golden Vanity*—according to the record—is Lonnie Donegan.

Essentially, the most stimulating source of folk music is still the folk, or what's left of them; and the indefatigable editor-collector, Alan Lomax, continues to produce some of the most compelling authentic folk music on record. Having released a brilliantly illuminating *Southern Folk Heritage* (Atlantic 1346-1352), Lomax has more recently been represented as a reminder of the roots in Caedmon's three-volume *The Folksongs of Britain* (TC 1142, 1143, 1144). The folkum tide, however, continues to rise. In early September, Grossinger's in the Catskills was the site of the first Annual Folk Music and Guitar Festival, which included a collegiate folk singing contest. Presumably, the contestant whose announcing style is closest to Jerry Lewis will be most likely to prove his right to the folkum crown.

**BOOKS**

# Drama as the Essence of Man's Tragic Confrontations

MODERN FRENCH THEATRE FROM GIRAUDOUX TO BECKETT. By Jacques Guicharnaud with June Beckelman. Yale University Press: $4.75.

By ALICE ELLEN MAYHEW

PROFESSOR Jacques Guicharnaud has written a brilliant series of essays on French dramatists of the last four decades which illustrates how the French theatre is approaching the terms of tragic art. While American writers are busily exposing the horizontal human conflicts, man in his milieu, in time, French theatre is committed to the vertical engagement, man in conflict with all that he confronts on every level of his peculiar and complex nature.

The result is an experiment with metaphysical theatre which takes the view that human crisis is philosophical (or dynamic) rather than sociological (or passive). Because socio-psychological theatre restricts itself to documenting the phenomena of daily life, it is directed toward the commonplace and boring. Because it excludes any transcendency—religious, mystical, or ontological—it can not transfigure our participation in existence: it merely repeats and lessens it. This kind of theatre, American theatre, has not even absorbed the preoccupations of tragedy. It is a theatre of systematic indolence.

French theatre has been searching for the form and language to express dramatically the essence of man's "tragic" confrontations. It demands a simultaneity of belief and disbelief, a sympathy for the hero on one level, and identification with him on the metaphysical level of his universal "condition."

Giraudoux, Cocteau and Claudel are exponents of a theatre of the supernatural: man involved in a universe that is larger than the total of its parts, informed and influenced by forces that are immutable. Giraudoux, the most eloquent of recent French playwrights (in a theatre of language), uses individual conflicts as metaphors of conflicts between universal themes. In his intelligible universe he arranges a drama of perpendicular tensions, intense because the two elements of struggle are mutually exclusive—war is everything that peace is not. The hero's crisis is one of choice.

Cocteau's theatre, "the double game," makes use of the supernatural mainly in terms of witchcraft and magic, by which the author raises illusion to the level of reality. But with Claudel, every drama must be perfectly integrated into an infinitely vaster drama—the Christian universe, a universe which is a parable, where the elements of conflict are not in doubt. The conflict is between shadow and light in a world enriched by the Christian dialectic but the crisis, or drama, lies in the hero's painful hesitations and complex struggles.

With Montherlant, Anouilh, Sartre and Camus the French theatre turns back to humanism. Man, isolated and tragic by his very nature, is the subject and the source of his own drama. Montherlant and Anouilh create intelligibility out of ambiguity. Sartre and Camus, more or less nihilistic, are concerned with the irony of intelligent man in the face of an unintelligible universe.

Anouilh transcends purely psychological drama to reach a certain definition of man and theatri-



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

representation. His characters ıy their parts when they wear the ıtume symbolic of the role: Joan her warrior's outfit, Becket shedıg his rich robes for a monk's bit take on the qualities of their ɔices. But though his theatre is ıbiguous, naturalistic ("Do you 're God?," King Henry asks cket. And Thomas replies, "I 're the *honor of God.*"), it is perıal and hopeful. Unlike the identifiable "tragic" heroes of the American stage on whom society has a stranglehold, Anouilh's actors can triumph as total men on whom neither Creon, Inquisitors nor kings can have a permanent hold.

What distinguishes the theatre of Sartre and Camus from other rationalistic philosophical theatre is the absolutely dramatic and concrete nature of the philosophy itself. Man has a privileged metaphysical position; and philosophy is action rather than speculation. It is dynamic. *I* act and, *no matter what* I do, I *commit* myself to action, and I *become* thus and so. Indeed, the agony is itself metaphysical, man confronting the void, being against nothingness.

Ionesco develops the same themes as Camus and Sartre although not to mark rationales of action but to note the failure of any such ambition. The best the hero of *Rhinoceros* can do is to refuse any political or social involvement. Ionesco is very witty in spite of the dreary realism of his settings; and his theatre is above all poetic —the fantasy of a farcical universe parallel to traditional reality.

Samuel Beckett has gone one step further. Without becoming abstract, his theatre totally avoids anecdote and established ideology. It is symbolic without being allegorical. There is neither debate nor confrontation; "There is merely the representation of the vacuum that separates the characters from what they want to obtain." It is *Existence* itself that is on stage.

Jean Genet has two plays current in New York: *The Balcony* and *The Blacks.* Genet's theatre is in itself an act of rebellion against definitions and images of the past. His characters are in a frenzy of anger against the definitions imposed upon them by others. His theatre is highly symbolic, ceremonious and surrealist.

In the modern French theatre, then, both naturalists and supernaturalists have claimed the notion of transcendency as basic to the human condition and as the quality that lifts man to the tragic level. They have used the theatre not to mirror life, nor as an instrument


A fresh and illuminating presentation of the Gospel according to John, newly interpreted by the eminent Dominican teacher in the light of recent studies in psychology, mythology and theology. Father Vann's adaptation of the gospel itself achieves unusual clarity, and his commentary richly illuminates the many meanings in John's thought—particularly the idea that life is a quest for integration.

**The Eagle's Word**

**By Gerald Vann, O.P.**

$4.50 at all bookstores

A Helen and Kurt Wolff Book
Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.

**ANY BOOK**

matter how old or how long out-of-print ated by expert staff. "Name the book— 'll find it." Fiction or non-fiction. All hors, subjects. Free search—courteous serv—no obligation to buy.

BOOKS-ON-FILE, Dept. CW
Union City, New Jersey

**Classified**

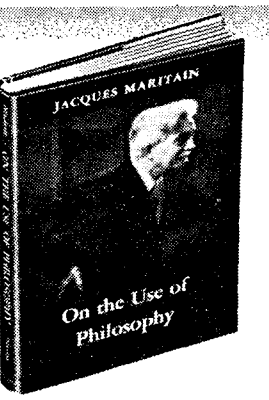
RATES: 20¢ a word, 12 words minimum. ıtered lines: $1.20 a line, 2 lines minimum. Discounts: 5% for 3 times, 10% for 7 times, 15% for 13 times. Payable with order.

Irish Books and Gifts

• Books, Linens, Gifts, Catalogs
IRISH INDUSTRIES DEPOT, INC.
'6 Lexington Ave. (near 65th), New York 21, N.Y.

Automotive Reports

AUTOMOTIVE DISORDER?? Waste?? Inside ports, 15¢. PEDESTRIAN LEAGUE, Box 1308, urch St. Sta., N.Y. 8, N.Y.




*A new book by the distinguished Catholic philosopher—*

**Jacques Maritain**

**ON THE USE OF PHILOSOPHY**

Three Essays

An examination of the role of philosophy in man's life, (*Truth and Human Fellowship* and *The Philosopher in Society*) and the relation of modern science to man's knowledge of God (*God and Science*). $2.75

*A masterpiece of Franciscan literature, newly translated—*

**MEDITATIONS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST**

An Illustrated Manuscript of the 14th Century

***Trans. & Ed. by Isa Ragusa.*** *Edited by Rosalie B. Green.* Of the illustrated versions of this 13th century classic, the Italian version translated here is the earliest and contains the greatest number of illustrations. Nearly 200 pen drawings enhance the narrative page by page just as in the original manuscript. The only English translation of any version of the Meditations now in print, this is both a book of devotions and a treasury of sacred illustrations. $15.00

*At your bookstore*

**Princeton** University Press
Princeton, New Jersey




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of simple storytelling, nor as an experiment in faithful accent but as a means of shocking the audience into an esthetic, intellectual and moral experience.

## Diffuse Panorama

MONMOUTH. By Charles Bracelen Flood. Houghton Mifflin. $4.95.

By CATHARINE HUGHES

PERHAPS the greatest danger encountered by the historical novelist is one of overabundance. With all the attractive personages, all the plenitude of event, he almost inevitably has to risk choosing. Too often, it sometimes seems, the risk is avoided.

The Battle of Monmouth was, in many ways, one of the most significant of the American Revolution. The months leading up to it—those of the winter of 1778—were filled with trial and tragedy for the ill-equipped colonial troops; a time in which to reconnoiter, perhaps, but also one when despair was near. All this Mr. Flood captures vividly and colorfully, conveying a sense of immediacy, a more than history-book vitality. With his characters themselves he is unfortunately less successful.

It is not that Captain Allen McLane's band of scouts and spies is itself lacking in interest, rather that Mr. Flood fails adequately to develop it. As each appears—McLane's two young lieutenants, Nicholas Burk and Abijah Silsby; the women they love; the members of the family with which they are quartered—the reader is at first attracted, then puzzled. When will *Monmouth* really come in focus? Regrettably, it never fully does. And it is probably the attraction exerted by such peripheral figures as Generals Howe and Charles Lee which must be held accountable. Rather than centering on McLane's two officers, *Monmouth* has an episodic quality which deprives it of any sustained narrative flow, ar genuine cohesion. The vignettes i themselves may be fascinating—a they often are—but, within the ove all context of the novel, they ar at best, diversionary. As a co sequence, we are presented not s much with a novel, as with a diffu historical panorama.

Since Mr. Flood is an extreme capable craftsman—and has, in t past, shown evidence of possessi a considerably more than avera talent—the root of *Monmouth's* least partial failure offers son cause for speculation. And o question which might be raised this: Does the contemporary nove ist—or, for that matter, playwrigh since one cannot help but think Tennessee Williams' *Period of A justment* in this context—err wh he steps completely outside his no mal concerns, his normal frame reference? Those who, like this r viewer, saw fit to criticize M Flood's earlier lack of variety subject matter, have something ponder.


*America's first and foremost periodical on the liturgy of the Church*

worship

**A review devoted to the Liturgical Apostolate**

Biblical-liturgical section, edited by Rev. Barnabas Ahern, C.P., with liturgically oriented articles which help to make the Bible spiritually meaningful.

Timely articles on the Dialog Mass, Sung Mass, Sacraments, Breviary, Vernacular, Lay Priesthood, Gregorian Chant, English Ritual, Liturgical Year, Mystical Body, Church Architecture, Paraliturgies, Reunion.

Liturgical problems column conducted by Rev. Frederick McManus of The Catholic University of America faculty.

Edited by Rev. Godfrey L. Diekmann, O.S.B., assisted by an international corps of front-line liturgists.

$4 one year 10 issues annually $7 two years

THE LITURGICAL PRESS

St. John's Abbey Collegeville, Minnesota

ICON CHRISTMAS CARDS
$1 a Dozen
Metalwork • Icons • Records
Books on Reunion, Eastern Rites
Write for Free Catalog
ICON & BOOK SERVICE, Dept. C
Fordham University, NY 58, NY



**BARNES & NOBLE, Inc.**
105 Fifth Avenue, New York 3, N.Y.
Over 1,000,000 Used & New Textbooks
of all publishers at
reduced prices


## Unpopular Virtues

HEAR US O LORD FROM HEAVE THY DWELLING PLACE. By Malcol Lowry. Lippincott. $4.95.

By THOMAS CURLEY

A PUBLISHER'S note to th volume tells us that Lowr who died in 1957, had planne this book as a unit and that th present arrangement of the storie is pretty much that of Lowry. N only that, Sigbjrn Wilderness, th main character in many of thes stories, was to have been a centr figure in *The Voyage That Neve Ends,* a sequence of six or seve books of which *Under The Volcan* was to have formed the center.

Most of us know Lowry on from *Under The Volcano,* althoug at least three of the stories here "The Bravest Boat," "Strang Comfort Afforded By The Profes sion" and "The Forest Path To Th Spring," appeared previously i American magazines. I know of no



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ɔdy who was not impressed by *nder The Volcano*. I was so im-ɛssed that I've been reluctant to ɛread the book. This volume goes long way towards removing that luctance.

The Volcano lodged in my emory as an intense, almost hletic, experience with an ob-ssed man, a drunkard, feverishly ert and self-destructive. Nothing the present volume is quite up *Under The Volcano* but what ıese stories do ("Through The anama," which runs about sixty ıges, is the longest) is fill out the nd of experience Lowry was orking to create and, incidentally ɛrhaps, give one a better notion Lowry himself.

"Through The Panama" is the ɛst. It is a wonderful story to ad, particularly if you like Lowry. At this point, I don't know hether I'm writing about Lowry one of his narrators, Sigbjrn ilderness or Martin Trumbaugh.) irst it is an account of a voyage om Canada to England through ıe Panama Canal; second, it is a ɔiritual voyage in which Lowry ıakes use of Coleridge's marginal ɔtes to the Ancient Mariner; third, provides us, before the storm last comes, with a number of pinions of one Martin Trumbaugh. or example: Martin had just de-vered himself of "a brilliant piece f scorn" anent someone who had ɔt out of England to escape "the ully-boys and homo-sapient school-ıasters of English literature" only ) find them quite as firmly en-enched in America. He remarks nmediately afterwards, "Now you ɛe how easy it is to be carried way by an impulse of hatred" and ɔes on to write a criticism of his ɛorn. Which brings him to the uestion of equilibrium.

He says, "Equilibrium, sobriety, ıoderation, wisdom: these un-ɔpular and unpleasant virtues, ithout which meditation and even ɔodness are impossible, must ɔmehow, because they are so un-leasant, be recommended as states f being to be embraced with a kind f passion, as indeed passions ıemselves, as the longing for good-ess itself is a passion. . . ."

"And yet one should be able passionately to impugn the wanton slaughter of wild creatures as something essentially cowardly, unworthy, contemptible and even suicidal without at the same time feeling bound in the same breath to attack your Hemingway; one should realize that your Hemingway has a right to shoot wild creatures and while he is engaged in that dubiously masculine occupation he is not, at least for the moment, shooting anyone else."

Lowry was rare in contemporary letters. He was a normal man of genius. He (his character) loves his wife and mother simply; he prays ("God give me, he asks, a chance to be truly charitable. Let me know what is You want me to do. . . ").

"The whole is an assembly of apparently incongruous parts, slipping past one another." This sentence, italicized by Lowry, is the clue to his great significance to us and to the value of this book. He was not content to be an artist merely; that is, he would not ignore reality, whether in the world without or within himself, in order to make a "better" or more suitably ordered work. To repeat, he was less interested in an orderly arrangement of images and incidents than in the relation of those images and incidents to reality. I think he could serve as a model to every writer of any ambition.

The sadness surrounding his death is that a lifework that was going forward promisingly should be cut off at the height of maturity. But that, too, is exemplary. Writers might even begin to meditate on death several minutes a day as a means of attaining equilibrium.

## REVIEWERS

**Alice Ellen Mayhew, a frequent contributor, is a New York editor and critic.**

**Catharine Hughes, a frequent contributor, has had one play produced and is now at work on her first novel.**

**Thomas F. Curley is a New York novelist and critic.**

Sappho Skyanotis is 4½. She is so small, so young, so frail, she seems not quite real. If there are plans or hopes in her mind, they are for an end to the hunger pains in her stomach.

Sappho's parents lost their household goods, their flock of goats in a tidal wave. Their patch of land is now untillable because of the ocean salt. The parents often do without a meal in order to nourish Sappho. Such a small, frail life—

# worth saving?

***Love... friendship... hope*** Through Save the Children Federation, you, your group, your school can bring love, friendship and material benefits to a child like Sappho. You will receive the photograph and story of the child you help and immediately begin a warm person-to-person relationship through an exchange of letters. Please fill in the coupon below so that a needy child in Greece, Korea, Lebanon, France, Italy, Finland, West Germany or Austria can look at the world with hope again.

*Save the Children Federation, an international, non-sectarian organization, is registered with the U. S. State Department Advisory Committee on Voluntary Foreign Aid and is a member of the International Union for Child Welfare.*

Serving Children for 30 Years

**SAVE THE CHILDREN FEDERATION**

Norwalk, Connecticut

I wish to contribute $150.00 annually to help a ☐ girl ☐ boy in _____ or where the need is greatest ☐ (countries listed above)

Enclosed is my first payment: $12.50 a month ☐

$37.50 a quarter ☐ $75 semi-annually ☐ $150 annually ☐

I cannot sponsor a child; enclosed is contribution of $_____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

Contributions are income tax deductible. CM 10-1




LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

# WHAT CHANCE

## DOES THE WORLD HAVE?

The future of the world is in his hands. How well this youngster and his colleagues are educated may determine the course of history.

It is up to us to give the world the best possible chance by giving our future citizens the best possible college educations.

Even now some of our colleges are overcrowded. In less than ten years, the number of applicants will double.

To maintain the quality of our higher education, we shall have to recruit and train thousands of professors. We will also need many more classrooms with the most advanced educational aids, more comprehensive college libraries, new laboratories with the latest scientific equipment.

Some students are now excluded from college, or given inferior education, because we neglected to see the problem. We must act to provide our youngsters with more and better college facilities and the finest college training possible.

Help the college of your choice now. Help it to expand and improve its facilities and to pay its teachers the salaries their high calling deserves.

---

If you want to know more about what the college crisis means to you and what you can do to help, write for a free booklet to Higher Education, Box 36, Times Square Station, New York 36, N. Y.

HIGHER EDUCATION
KEEP IT BRIGHT

*Sponsored in cooperation with The Advertising Council and the Council for Financial Aid to Education.*

ADVERTISING COUNCIL PUBLIC SERVICE

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED